



Dear colleagues,

For most of us, today begins the sixth week of the semester while our medical school colleagues are already on week eight. All campuses are full of vibrant activity as we approach the midpoint of the semester. Here are a few updates that may be of interest.

Student Success Markers

I am pleased to share this great news:

- 84% of students attending last spring returned this fall, the second highest in a six-year period;
- 75% of last year's freshmen returned this year, an increase of 1.9% over the previous year and the highest in a three-year period;
- 5,186 students are enrolled in one of 271 ACE (academic community engagement) courses, a 14% increase over last fall;
- 1,370 freshmen are enrolled in UNIV 1101, "Bearkat U," a 32% increase over last fall; and
- The First-Gen Center piloted its Trailblazer Mentoring Program with 70 first-gen freshmen and yielded a 93% retention rate.

These gains are important for our campus community and are consistent with our strategic priority to recruit, retain, and graduate our students. I thank you for being steadfast in making student access and student success an institutional priority.

University Policy and SB18

I wanted to provide a brief update on [Senate Bill 18](#), known informally as the "tenure bill," which was signed into law this summer by Gov. Abbott. The bill codified tenure and post-tenure review into state law effective September 1. Changes to policies and procedures were needed both at the System and the University level to comply with the new law.

For the System, the TSUS Board of Regents approved changes to relevant rules and regulations at its August 10 board meeting.

For SHSU, the institution implemented an interim policy for [ASIS 264](#) the board meeting in fall of 2018. Interim m \$rto % effp

instrument to determine whether additional pilot testing for a student perceptions instrument is needed, or if we need to pursue other solutions. This is a significant decision for the institution, so your feedback will be instrumental.

For those interested, [here](#) is where you can review which items in the longer IDEA Diagnostic Feedback comprise the shorter 12-item Teaching Essentials measure (items labeled TE).

Student Well Being

As many of you know, we azg